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No. 63.

THE TWO SLUMBERS.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

One day my baby nestled
Close down against my breast,
And whispered, "I am tired,
And now I want to rest."

And I held her on my bosom,
And sung a ditty old,
About the Sunset City
Whose streets are paved with gold.

Soon her baby hands dropped gently
Across my heart, and then her head
And the spell of sleep fell o'er her
And wrapped her in its rest.

Again my darling nestled
Within my loving arms,
And my heart would vainly entice her
From all of earth's alarms.

"I'm tired," she whispered, "Sing me
That dear old song ag'in."
And I sang it over gently,
To charm away her pain.

Her eyelids fell together
And hid away the light,
But I knew the dawn of Heaven
Was breaking on her sight.

Her weary hands were folded
Upon a wearier breast,
And I felt that my poor, tired darling
Had found an endless rest.

In the Web

THE GIRL-WIFE'S TRIALS.

A HEART AND LIFE ROMANCE OF THE CRESCENT CITY.

BY EDWIN SOUTH.

CHAPTER VII.

THE COUNTERPLOT.

We will now follow the dark figure which we have seen escape from Jackson Square. As it passes in front of the gas lamp there we catch a glimpse of a shriveled face, that might have been alabaster in its youth, but certainly more resembles parchment now; it was the face of a woman of sixty—a crafty, cunning face, but not unkind or repulsive, by any means.

Despite her years she walked rapidly and soon reached a tall, fine-looking dwelling on Dauphin street. Without stopping to rap she pushed open the door and ascended to the second floor. Here she tapped softly at a door, from under which a strong ray of light crept into the darkness of the corridor.

The door was instantly unlocked from the inside and Mandy stood on the threshold.

"Come in, Martha, good soul, come in!" were her first words, as soon as she recognized her visitor.

"Is that Martha?" cried a voice from the inside, which clearly was that of Bradley Turner.

"Yes, my child; it's old Martha," replied the old woman, hobbling into the room.

She looked around at the comfortable crimson carpet; at the soft, luxurious chairs and sofa; at the heavily-framed pictures on the wall, and then over at Bradley, where he sat shuffling a pack of cards at a table.

"Hum, hum, but you're comfortable here, Miss Mandy. Nicer is it sitting here than tramping over this big city in the fog and night air," she remarked, as she dropped into a chair and threw off her big hood.

"Yes," replied Mandy, coming forward, and laying her hand on Martha's shoulder, "we are very comfortable, and I know you are very tired."

"Yes, indeed! and that I am; and all for nothing, or next to nothing."

"You don't mean to say that you've been galivanting on the scent all night, and have found nothing at the end of the trail—does you?" asked Turner, dropping the cards and looking into Martha's face.

"Well, did you ever!" exclaimed the old woman. "There's my thanks for helping you two to do a noble action. Well, did you ever!"

"Now, just listen to that provoking old woman. Whose noble action is it, I'd like to know? Is it mine? I guess not!" and having said this, in an injured tone, and with a show of indignation, Turner threw himself back on his chair and fell to a contemplation of the ceiling.

"There, there now; don't quarrel over who is responsible for a good Christian act," said Mandy, soothingly. "I'm sure you both have reason to be proud of the aid you have given me in my weak endeavor to save a poor, wronged wife from despair, and perhaps death."

"But he is so snappish," put in Martha. "Bless me if I can live in the same house with him, hardly."

"Never mind Brad," replied Mandy. "What have you discovered?"

"Well," and as the old woman began, she folded her hands in her lap in a self-satisfied way, "I've found out that Silas Norman is plaguey afraid of you two betraying him. He said as much to the young man when he met him in the Square."

"Well," said Mandy, eagerly. "What then?"

"He told him he had a man on Spain street to do what he had first cut out for Turner, here, to do."

"Did you hear the name of the individual?" asked Turner.

"Yes, but not very plain. You see, I had that big block of stone, on which Jackson's horse stands, between me and them, and I had some trouble in catching their words."

"What was the name?" asked Mandy.

"Well, it sounded—mind, I don't say it's the name, but I say it sounded like Pedro Melto."

"Bully!" broke in Turner. "Now, matters are getting interesting. Do you know, Mandy, that this thing of doing a disinterested Christian act is pleasant now and

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Tillie fell forward upon the new grave, and wept as she had never wept before.

then, by way of variety? It wouldn't do to follow as a regular business, you know."

"And why not?" asked Mandy, her eyes sparkling as she witnessed the enthusiasm of her friend.

"Why not?" ejaculated Turner. "Would you have us starve to death?"

"No, not a bit of it, and I'm almost ashamed to hear you say so, Brad Turner. There is such a thing as working for an honest living, is there not?"

"Working for a living?" repeated Brad, as if stunned by the thought. "You wouldn't; now come, Mandy, you wouldn't have a fellow to come down to plain, hard work like a nigger. You can't mean that?"

"Yes, I do, and nothing else, although I can't see that work would make a nigger of you. Work is not ignoble if the laborer is not degraded already."

Bradley Turner gazed at the speaker in open-mouthed wonder, and when she had finished he said, rather thoughtfully:

"Mandy Norman, you're just as far above me and that rascally old humbug Norman, as the sun is above the earth, and you're just about that much brighter and better than either of us."

"No, no Brad; you are mistaken. I have known of the perpetration of robberies and have kept my silence, thereby making myself as guilty as those who actually did the stealing. My father—"

"Your bogus father, you mean," interrupted Brad.

"Well, it don't matter. He's the only father I ever knew, and while I know that he is not my real parent, still he has been kind to me often, and, as I was about to remark, I would like better than all things to see him from this terrible life he is leading."

"Can't never do it," put in Martha, who had been an attentive listener. "Silas Norman is bad from the bone out, and it's no use for any person talking or trying to tell me anything else."

"Guess no person will worry themselves trying to convince you," said Turner, with sly sarcasm.

Martha was warming up for a fresh onslaught, but Mandy, seeing this, turned the conversation adroitly, by saying:

"What do you propose to do now, Brad, about this Blanchard affair?"

"Do? Why, I'll find out Mister Pedro Melto of Spain street to-morrow night, and then I'll dog him to the home of Mark Blanchard's cast-off toy, and then prepare Mrs. Mark for a grand tableau, minus the red fire."

The plan appeared very good and easy of execution, and Mandy said:

she had done. Abel Maynard would hang his head in disgrace were he to know that his daughter—his pet, his own Tillie—was the wife of a forger.

At these thoughts, this knowledge, were very bitter to that poor, half-crazed creature, and, not knowing well what else to do, she laid her head upon the window-sill and wept hot tears, like a vexed child.

A tap at the door aroused her, and turning, she beheld Sam Pettis—big, burly, rough Sam Pettis—standing in the doorway, biting his nether lip, and looking very much puzzled.

"Well, Sam, what is it?" she asked, wiping her eyes.

"The truth is, Mistress Tillie," he began, "I didn't mean to find you crying—I didn't, indeed."

"Oh, it doesn't make any difference, Sam. I'm only a foolish girl, and I'm not worth minding."

"Well, as to that, Mistress Tillie, I can't agree with you. You're too good and sweet to cry much, and I don't want to be bold, or any thing like that, you know, but if there is any thing Sam Pettis can do for you to keep you from crying and to make you happy, you can count on him—that's all."

The rough fellow's face was aglow with the tenderest compassion as he said these words, and Tillie felt as if she could almost worship him. His kindness overcame her, however, and, instead of answering him, she burst into a fresh flood of tears. Sam Pettis looked at her helplessly, and seating himself on a stool just by the door, he put up his hands to his face, and cried out.

This was the position of affairs when Sallie Pettis came in out of the cornfield, a few minutes later—her hands full of fresh-laid eggs—and looking from one to the other, she exclaimed:

"What on earth is the matter with you two?"

"Oh, Sallie! I felt so lonesome, and I was crying, and Sam there—poor Sam—he pitied me," said Tillie, looking up through her tears.

"Well, I do say!" exclaimed Sallie; "that's the first time I ever seed Sam Pettis cry in his natural life."

And saying this, Sallie sat down, and began to sob too.

"Is this where Samuel Pettis lives?"

The voice was low and insinuating, tinged with a slight foreign accent, and on the weeping trio looking suddenly up, they saw the form of Pedro Mento in the open door way.

"Yes, sir, I live here," replied Sam, rising, and a trifle embarrassed.

"Does Mrs. Blanchard live here, too?" asked Pedro.

"Yes," answered Tillie, before any other person could speak.

"I have a letter from your husband to you." He held out a delicate white missive, and, with a feverish eagerness, Tillie ran forward and clutched it.

Kissing it passionately, she broke the seal and read it half aloud.

It was very brief, and ran thus:

"Galveston, Oct. 18—

"DEAR WIFE: The bearer of this is my best friend, Pedro Marchia. You can trust him fully to conduct you to Vera Cruz where I hope to meet you soon. Lose no time, but start at once."

"Your devoted husband, M. B."

"Yes, I will go at once," she said, as she finished reading. "I would go to the end of the world for his sake. When do we start?" This to Pedro.

"If madame is ready," replied the Spaniard, deferentially, "we will go now."

"Now! Why, she can't go now. She is not ready," exclaimed Sallie. "Why, I do say, the very idea of a person running off in this way!"

Tillie smiled. "I'm quite ready, Sallie. My wardrobe is not so extensive. And you, sir," she said, addressing herself to Pedro; "you promise to take good care of me until we meet again?"

"I do, madame," was the reply.

There was a half an hour spent in filling a valise with a few articles of Tillie's wearing apparel, and in bidding poor, simple-hearted Sam, and kind, patient Sallie, goodbye, and then the two travelers were off on their long journey.

They took the train to Brashear City;

thence by steamer to Galveston, and there they were compelled to wait for three days for the sailing of a brig bound for Mazatlan.

The weather was very beautiful—the days warm and pleasant, the nights moonlit.

Notwithstanding the delights incident to a sea voyage at such a season, Tillie thought the days very long, and the nights inexplicably dreary.

For the first two days after leaving port she kept her state-room religiously; but, a little after sunset, on the third day, at the solicitation of Pedro and the captain of the vessel, she ventured on deck.

In the east the moon was soaring, lifting itself up out of the waters, which, like a liquid wilderness, stretched everywhere, just ruffled into ripples by a slight breeze, that filled the belled sails and drove the little craft southward.

"It's a purty night, missus," said Captain Black, leaning over the taffrail and addressing Tillie.

"Yes, sir; a very beautiful night," was the reply.

"Do you like moonlight nights on sea?" asked the old sailor.

"This is the first time I ever saw the sea by night, and I think I never saw any thing half so lovely."

"And you never saw it at night before, eh? Well, well, but that sounds queer, marm—mighty queer, I can tell you—especially to an old sea-dog like me, as was rocked in the cradle of the deep, as the song says."

There was a pause for a minute or two, and then the captain added: "Born inland—eh?"

"Yes."

"Far from the ocean?"

"On the Cumberland river."

"In Kentucky?"

"No; in Tennessee, close to Clarksville."

"So, so! Way up there? Seems to me it would be hard to get one's breath, away up there among the hills."

She laughed at this odd idea, and Pedro, who had been silently watching the sea all the time, laughed as well.

After that night, the captain took quite a fancy to Tillie's society, and many a tedious hour she escaped in listening to the yarns Captain Black was very fond of spinning.

At last, Mazathan was reached, and here another vessel was found, which, in due season, carried our travelers to the stone-girt harbor of Vera Cruz.

CHAPTER IX.

"LORD HAVE MERCY UPON US."

As the vessel touched the quay, Tillie strained her eyes shoreward to see if she could not somewhere detect the form of her husband on the crowded landing. But, no; he was not there, and the people all about her were talking in a fierce, foreign tongue, that made her feel—oh, so keenly—how much of a stranger she was.

"Where is Mark?" she asked, turning to Pedro, as they left the vessel.

"At the 'Hotel La Plata,' madame," was the reply. "That is where he told me to meet him."

They picked their way carefully among the barrels and bales that lined the shore, and soon they found themselves in an open square.

"That is the 'Hotel La Plata' over there," said the Spaniard, pointing to a large stone house, with a colonnade in front, and all its windows protected from the sun by small, scalloped awnings.

Tillie followed the direction pointed out, and was pleased to find that the hotel externally gave indications of refinement.

A walk of a few minutes and the hotel was reached. Pedro conducted Tillie into the parlor, and went in quest of the clerk.

He came back presently, and introduced to her the proprietor of the house.

"Madame wishes a good room, with every accommodation," said Pedro.

"We will try to please the señorita," answered the Boniface, bowing profoundly. Then the two men exchanged a few words in Spanish, and, with another bow, the landlord withdrew.

"Where is Mark?" questioned Tillie, as soon as she and Pedro were alone again. "Why don't he come?"

"He is out of town, madame," was the response, "and will not reach the city until midnight."

Tillie looked, searchingly, up into the man's face, and his eyes fell and his face colored crimson.

"You are deceiving me, Pedro," she said, decidedly. "I know you are deceiving me."

"I am not, madame."

"You said but now Mark was here, at the hotel; now you claim he is out of town. Tell me, now, Pedro, the truth."

The Spaniard dropped his eyes and remained silent. This frightened Tillie. She thought she discovered a disposition to withhold from her the real whereabouts of her husband, and she was all a-tremble when she said:

"Oh, Pedro, for Heaven's sake, if not for mine, do not—do not keep me in this terrible suspense. Tell me—tell me where is my husband?"

The Spaniard looked into the beautiful face opposite, so full of agony and entreaty, and while a shade of counterfeited sadness passed over his face, he answered:

"If Madame Blanchard could only bear a little trouble—"

Tillie was upon her feet in an instant. Her eyes were fixed, with a starry, despairing gaze, upon Pedro's dusky face; her hands worked nervously, and her form quivered with excitement.

"What do you mean, Pedro?"

The Spaniard hung his head and was silent still.

"Pedro Mento, do you wish to stand there dumb until I go raving mad? Speak out! Where is Mark Blanchard, my husband?"

"Will Madame be patient while I speak?"

"As Job; go on!"

"Then, Sir! Blanchard is very ill."

"Sick, Pedro? Do you mean to say that he is sick?"

"Very sick."

"Where?"

"At San Madeline."

"Where is San Madeline?"

"Two miles off."

"Then let us go to him at once!" exclaimed Tillie. "I must see him. My eyes are aching for the sight."

"Not now, madame. We can not go now."

"And why not?"

"You are tired and need rest. We will go-morrow."

She shook off the hand that he laid upon her arm. "No, I am not tired; and, were my feet blistered and bleeding, I would manage to crawl upon my hands and knees to see my husband. Oh, Pedro, you can not understand the depth of my love for Mark. I hardly can realize it myself."

This strong, unselfish love was a new revelation to Pedro Mento, and he began to feel how difficult it would be to control such a nature. He determined on putting an end to this scene at once: and so he said:

"Madame would not find him at San Madeline if she did go."

"Not at San Madeline?"

"And why not?"

"Because Sir! Blanchard is not there."

Tillie's face assumed an ashen hue, and she felt a heavy weight, as of lead, crushing her heart.

Between her teeth she managed to ask:

"What do you mean?"

"You will take comfort, my dear madame, but I have very bad news for you. The landlord has just told me Sir! Blanchard fought a duel on Tuesday last."

"Well, well! Go on!" exclaimed Tillie, clutching at Pedro's arm. "Did he kill the man?"

"No, madame. Poor Señor Mark was killed!"

The young wife let go her hold of the man's arm, and, with a moan, sunk helpless to the floor.

At first, Pedro thought she was dead, so limp and colorless was she; but, when he picked her up and placed her upon a sofa near an open window, the glow came faintly back into her cheeks; and presently she opened her eyes and stared about her.

Then the terrible reality of her position came flashing across her mind, corroding it with its fearful fire, and causing her to cry out:

"Oh! my God! I'm going mad—mad—mad!" Her beautiful brown hair fell in a shower about her shoulders; her eyes blazed as if they would burn their lashes, and Pedro, for the nonce, thought she was really crazed.

He sat opposite to her, on the sofa, his own eyes filled with tears, for the wretch was a capital actor, and in vain did he try to comfort her.

She looked at him sternly, and was about to utter a stinging rebuke, but, noticing his tears, she fell to weeping herself, crying out at intervals.

"Oh, God, have pity, have pity!" When the first outburst had subsided she talked to Pedro calmly of her situation; at least as calmly as a frantic woman could, and he finally prevailed upon her to go to her chamber and take a few hours of rest.

"In the morning," he said, "we will go out to the cemetery of San Madeline, and see his grave."

She wanted to go then, but the Spaniard said it was too late to think of such a thing, and that in the morning she would be better and more able to walk.

Yes, she agreed with him; she was not able to walk now, and in the morning they would go.

It was a night full of pain and heartache to poor Tillie. Thousands of miles from home, friendless and alone in the first hours of a great bereavement. She tried to sleep, but it was impossible. Her feelings were too bitter to be quieted with anything short of death itself.

As the cathedral bell of San Louis tolled the midnight hour, she pushed back the drapery that concealed her chamber window and looked out into the night.

The moon was shining brightly, gilding the spires and domes of the old Aztec city with floods of liquid gold. The soft, delicate music of a church choir, pealing forth a requiem for a departed soul, came upon the wing of the night wind to her ear, and the hymn of midnight from a Benedictine Monastery welled up from the sleeping squares below until her whole being was thrilled with the mystery of the music.

"Kyrie Eleison" was the burden of the refrain, and falling upon her knees by the open window, she echoed it in plainest English: "Lord have mercy upon us!"

When the morning came at last it found her asleep, just where she had knelt. Dressing herself, she went down to the drawing-room and encountered Pedro.

He spoke to her kindly, and gave her a purse of five hundred Mexican dollars, which, he said, Mark had left in the landlord's care for her.

Then they canvassed the situation, and Tillie decided that she would remain in Vera Cruz, close to Mark's grave, until death would place her by his side. Pedro advised a return to New Orleans at once, but he did not urge it strongly, and soon gave in to her plan, and the matter was considered settled.

Two miles east of Vera Cruz, on a sloping hillside overlooking the bay, lies the cemetery of San Madeline. It is an antique old Necropolis, and holds tombs bearing date two centuries back. Some of its stones are sound and upright yet, but many have been eaten into by the teeth of a thousand tempests, and some are shattered and covered with clinging vines and velvet moss.

About noon, on the day following her arrival in Vera Cruz, Tillie and Pedro made their way through this silent city of the dead, and finally paused before a new-made grave.

There was a plain slab of brown stone at its head, and with streaming eyes and breaking heart, Tillie managed to trace out the inscription, which ran thus:

"Sacred to the Memory

OR
MARK BLANCHARD.
Requesent in Peace."

She fell forward upon the new grave, and wept as she had never wept before.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 61.)

The Winged Whale: OR, THE MYSTERY OF RED RUPERT.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "SCARLET HAND," "HEART OF FIRE,"
"WOLF DEMON," ETC.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SECRET OF NANON.

By the window of her humble apartment in the little inn sat the French girl, Nanon, gazing dreamily out upon the view before her.

Far off in the distance was the dark line of the forest, that fringed, with leafy green, the blue waters of the bay. On the forest line the eyes of the girl rested.

Nanon was now attired in the garb of her sex. A simple dress of white, which loosely flowing, only half hid the beautiful outlines of her perfect form.

The face of the girl was deadly pale. Her features told plainly of the terrible scene of the previous night that had transpired within the forest, on which her eyes now rested.

A low sigh came from her lips. A sigh that revealed the anguish that pervaded her heart.

"Oh! I am so wretched!" she murmured, sadly. "Why did I not remain in New Orleans? What demon tempted me to seek here the man who does not care for the love which once he tried so hard to win?"

The sad musings of the girl were interrupted by a low tap upon the door.

"Come in," she said. She guessed who was her visitor.

The door opened and Baptiste entered. A sad smile played around the beautiful lips of the girl at his approach. She extended her hand to him. With a motion, full of love, full of tenderness, he carried the soft, white hand to his lips and imprinted a kiss upon it. A moment he looked steadily into the pale face of the girl, an earnest look upon his features. In her face he read the truth. Silently he brought a chair and sat down by her side.

"Nanon, you are not well," he said, slowly.

"You are right, Baptiste; I am not well, for I am sick—sick at heart," she replied, with a sad smile.

"Ah, Nanon, you would not pay heed to my advice last night," he said, mournfully.

"I warned you of the consequences, but you were willful and would have your own way."

"You are but a feeble girl, not strong. It is a wonder that your life did not pay the forfeit for last night's rash adventure. When I met you in your disguise coming from the house where this American resides, I could hardly believe my eyes, yet I recognized your face on the instant. And now, I regret that I yielded to your prayers and allowed you to commit this act of madness."

"Oh, Baptiste, you are so good to me!" the girl murmured, softly, and she clasped the strong hand of the Frenchman within her own little palms, as she spoke.

"Nanon, you know that I would lay down my life to serve you!" Baptiste replied, earnestly.

"From my soul, I believe you. Would to heaven that I could requite your love," the girl said, mournfully.

"Nanon, when will you leave this place and return to Orleans?"

"I do not know—I can not tell," the girl replied, in broken accents.

"Is it the baleful influence of this man—this Spanish captain, Estevan—that draws you here?"

The girl did not reply, but silently covered her face with her hands.

"You do not reply. I understand; my guess is right," Baptiste said, slowly.

"Oh, Nanon, it will be far better for you in the end."

"I hope so," she replied, a sad accent in her clear voice.

"With wondering eyes, Nanon looked upon the grave face of Baptiste. His words were so strange that she could not guess their meaning.

"When I cease to love him, I shall die," she murmured, sorrowfully. "When I crush the love from my heart, I banish all the sunlight from my life."

"Even if I convince you that he is unworthy of your love? that at the very moment he is protesting to you that you are dearer than all else in the world to him, he is moving both heaven and earth to win another woman?"

"But can you do this?" the girl asked, sadly; it was hard to convince her of her lover's falsehood.

"And at present, I can not explain; but I urge you, Nanon, as you value your own peace of mind—to crush out of your heart the love that exists there for this Spanish officer."

"I do not understand," she murmured, bewildered.

"And at present, I can not explain; but I urge you, Nanon, as you value your own peace of mind—to crush out of your heart the love that exists there for this Spanish officer."

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"And at present, I can not explain; but I urge you, Nanon, as you value your own peace of mind—to crush out of your heart the love that exists there for this Spanish officer."

"I do not understand," she murmured, bewildered.

"Isn't this glorious fun, comrade?" questioned the soldier, with a chuckle. "Do you know that there is no sport in the world like a man-hunt?"

"Yes; but this happens to be a woman-hunt," replied Baptiste, dryly.

"She'll lead me to the man, fast enough."

"And what are we going to do when we find him?" asked the Frenchman, although he had a pretty clear idea of the nature of the events that were to come.

"Give him a rapier-thrust or two, and tumble his body into the bay," replied the soldier, grimly.

"Suppose he resists?"

"Are we not five to one, not counting the captain?" demanded Roque, in contempt. "He could not escape our swords were he the devil himself, instead of a heretic of an American."

All the while that this conversation was progressing they were still stealing along in the footsteps of the girl, keeping well in the shadows of the houses, and adopting every precaution that ingenuity could suggest to prevent the girl from discovering that she was followed.

All at once Roque stopped.

"It is useless for you to go any further. You may as well return at once and lead the captain and the rest here. Do you see the last house yonder?" and Roque pointed northward.

"Yes."

"Tell the captain to halt there and wait my coming. I will follow the girl until she meets her lover, and then return and conduct the captain."

"But are you sure that you know the road that the girl will take? She may have led us on a false scent."

"Oh, no!" Roque cried, quickly; "if she had been going to the forest, she would have turned to the left long ago. She will walk on the beach. Remember, the captain is to wait yonder." Then the soldier again stole onward, while Baptiste retraced his steps.

In his bosom his hand sought a loaded pistol.

"The Spaniard seeks to assassinate the American in the darkness. It would be a terrible accident if, in the confusion, one of the shots should strike *him*," Baptiste muttered. There was a world of meaning in the little sentence.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SCUD FOR BLOOD.

The dark clouds were chasing each other rapidly over the face of the sky. So dense were the clouds, and so quickly did they follow each other, that it was only now and then the clear rays of the moon lighted up the earth.

Just beyond the edge of the town, by the beach on which the dark waters of the sea were ceaselessly leaping with a sullen roar, stood Rupert and the maid he loved so well—the fair Spanish girl, Isabel.

Tightly she clung to the manly bosom of her lover, and gazed with eyes full of passionate tenderness into the swarthy face of the man who had won her young heart's love.

No dread of danger was in the minds of the lovers. They thought only of the happiness of the moment.

Locked in each other's arms, they renewed the vows that they had so often exchanged.

The clouds scuttled across the sky; the sea roared, and tossed its white-capped billows in upon the sandy beach; the wind whistled around them with a mournful cry. They noted neither the sky nor earth, the wind nor sea. Rupert saw only the azure eyes of Isabel, felt only the warm pressure of her lips and the quick throbings of her heart, beating wildly in response to his own. And Isabel, on her part, thought only of the man whose arms encircled her.

A footstep grating upon the sandy strand, and a dark figure coming rapidly toward them, startled the two from their passion-trance of love. With one hand Rupert pressed the girl to his side, while with the other he drew a pistol from the concealment of his breast. He leveled the weapon full at the dark figure that was approaching with such haste, but a warning cry, given cautiously in Andrews' well-known voice, caused him to drop his hand.

"Do not fear, Isabel," Rupert said, quickly; "it is a friend—Decius Andrews, my first officer."

"Look out, cap'n!" cried Andrews, cautiously, as he came up to Rupert; "there's a squall coming. We'll have to make sail, for we'll need sea-room."

"What is the matter?"

The Spaniard saw at once how great was his advantage on the sea.

"But, none of my men are sailors!"

Estevan cried, the objection suddenly occurring to him. "No one of us can handle a boat."

"I can, señor!" cried the Frenchman, quickly, the passion for blood rising in his veins. All men have more or less of the savage spirit of the bloodhound in their natures. As Roque Vasca had said, no game like a human one!

"You are a sailor?"

"Yes, I have followed the sea since childhood," Baptiste replied.

"Let us pursue them then at once!" Estevan cried.

With eager haste they ran to the boat, and dragging it from the beach gave it the embrace of the sea.

"Well, I guess it is! There's six of them altogether, and they mean mischief. I waited till they separated on their surrounding business, and then I got out of the hole and made tracks for you."

"What do you advise, Andrews?" asked Rupert. He had great faith in the ready wit of the shrewd Yankee.

"Run," replied Andrews, laconically.

"Run!" Rupert did not like the idea. Few times in his life had he turned his back on a foe.

"Yes; there are too many of them to fight. Besides, think of the danger of Miss here—and again the Yankee bowed gallantly to Isabel—"getting hurt in the 'ruction," as a Paddy-wacker would say."

"You are right!" cried Rupert, fully convinced by the reference to Isabel's danger. "But how can we escape? Did you not say that we were surrounded by these villains?"

"Well, I rather calculate we are by this time," replied Andrews, coolly.

"How escape, then?"

"By our natural element—the water. They can't come any surround on old salt there," and a tone of affection was in the voice of Andrews, and a sparkle of pride in his keen eyes, as he pointed to the tossing billows. A sailor reared, he had all a sailor's pride in the great salt sea.

"Escape by means of the sea!" said Rupert, in astonishment; "but the means?"

"If my eyes don't deceive me, there's a fisherman's boat yonder, oars and all," and Andrews pointed to the beach.

The Yankee was right. Rupert had been too much absorbed in the blue eyes and sweet face of Isabel to notice aught else.

"We shall escape them almost by a miracle!" cried Rupert, leading Isabel to the beach, upon which, out of the reach of the tide, the boat lay.

"I guess they'll be some pretty tall swearing when the Doms make their rush and find us safe upon the sea," said Andrews, with a dry chuckle.

The two men slid the light boat into the water, which received it with a close embrace as if glad to welcome the craft back to its native element.

"You see the darkness covers our movement from the sight of the cowardly curs!" exclaimed Andrews, as he assisted Isabel into the boat. "I suppose about this time they're creeping in upon us like a lot of snakes. If the moon will only keep under the clouds for fifteen or twenty minutes longer, the tassel skunks will never be able to guess what's become of us."

Rupert entered the boat, and then with a vigorous push, Andrews committed the craft to the tide, leaping nimbly on board as he did so. The light boat danced merrily on the heaving surface of the waters.

"You'll have a nice sail homeward, Miss," said Andrews, to the girl, whose smiling face showed no thought of fear. Then the Yankee placed the little mast in its socket and gave the sail to the wind. The breeze, blowing straight from the shore, filled the canvas, and the boat feeling it, began to move swiftly through the water.

The wavelets curled in little ripples from the bow, and sang a low, merry song as they broke into gurgling bubbles and floated past the little boat.

Then the moon brook through the clouds and flooded earth and sea with its silver light, making all things as clear as by the daylight.

On the shore a group of men were standing in the very spot, where, but a moment before, the lovers had stood!

A cry of rage came from the group when the bright rays of the moon revealed to them the manner in which their prey had escaped them. A shower of curses came across the surface of the water.

Andrews laughed in derision, as the boat obeyed his firm hand grasping the helm and sped rapidly seawards before the wind.

The mocking laugh of the Yankee filled the heart of the Spanish captain—for it was Estevan in person who led the assassin band—with rage.

"A thousand curses!" he cried, in anger; "the dog will escape me! I'd give a hundred pieces to see that cursed American sink from the boat into the sea."

"I'll put a ball through his head, captain!" cried Roque, drawing a heavy pistol from his belt and leveling it across his arm at the figure of Andrews seated in the stern of the boat.

"Do not fire!" cried Estevan, grasping the arm of the soldier. "The distance is too great for an accurate aim; you might miss the American and hit the girl. I would not have her die for all the gold in this New World."

"The devil himself aids these heretics!" cried Roque, philosophically, as he replaced the pistol in his belt.

"I did not think that the American could escape from me this time!" muttered Estevan, in rage.

"Bah! if there hadn't happened to be a boat here, the devil, his patron, would have taken him up in the air!" cried Roque, and a "chance" had come sooner than he expected, and Phil saw no reason why he should not avail himself of it.

"Miss Thorne?"

A pair of violet eyes looked up quickly into his, and then two little hands were extended in welcome. Phil took them both in his for a moment, but refused the seat she motioned to him to take beside her.

"No; I will only detain you for a few moments, and it is to ask a favor of you that I am come."

"A favor? Nothing very difficult to grant, I trust," she said, smiling.

"No; at least I hope not. Miss Thorne, my brother has told me of the offer he has recently made you, and of your rejection of his suit?"

"Well?" and a grave look came over the little face.

"And the favor I am about to ask, is that you will consider your answer more seriously before you make it final one. You are young and thoughtless—may perhaps have been actuated by coquetry. But I am very much devoted to you, and I can see no possible objection to your being his wife, for in two months he comes into possession of his entire property, and—"

"Yes, señor, yonder is another boat—a sail in her too. They are driving before the wind which is blowing from the land. If we follow them, they must either return and meet us or else be driven out to sea. Once beyond the bay, yon egg-shell would not live ten minutes in such a sea as is now running."

The Spaniard saw at once how great was his advantage on the sea.

"But, none of my men are sailors!"

Estevan cried, the objection suddenly occurring to him. "No one of us can handle a boat."

"I can, señor!" cried the Frenchman, quickly, the passion for blood rising in his veins. All men have more or less of the savage spirit of the bloodhound in their natures. As Roque Vasca had said, no game like a human one!

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"Escape by means of the sea!" said Rupert, in astonishment; "but the means?"

skipper. He hasn't lost an inch of water. We'll have to keep on seaward or else he'll be aboard of us."

"Why not make for the cove?" questioned Rupert. "I do not think that yonder boat is any better sailer than our own. If we can hold them at this distance in our rear, once within the cove, we can bid defiance to them."

"That's sound sense, cap'n. Once in the cove we're safe, and if the Spaniards dare to follow us, the demon of the water, the Winged Whale, will make mince-meat of 'em."

(To be continued—Continued in No. 57.)

Phil's Intercession.

BY JENNIE LEIGH.

"Wife, Floyd, my dear fellow, what is the matter? You look as if life had lost its charm, and you were the most miserable man alive."

Floyd Van Arden threw down the cigar he had been smoking so vigorously, and lifted his dark, melancholy eyes to his elder brother's face.

"Jesting aside, Phil, I believe you are about right, and that I am the most miserable of men. I have proposed to Rose Thorne, and she has rejected me!"

"But that little coquette rejected you? It is impossible, Floyd, that she is in earnest. She is only trifling to prove your devotion. You are young, handsome, wealthy, everything in fact that a fashionable belle can desire in a husband, and of course you can win her for yourself if you really care to."

Floyd doubted not in his own mind that he possessed all the advantages ascribed to him, yet for once he failed to share his brother's confidence in his ultimate success.

"No, Phil, you don't know her as I do. She is an angel in beauty and loveliness, and I shall never cease to adore her, even though I know my love is hopeless."

"Hopeless? Nonsense! I'll speak to her myself. I'll tell her, I get, and ask her to reconsider her first answer. I have not the least doubt in the world it will all come out right in the end."

With a parting injunction to his brother not to be discouraged, Phil left him and started for his evening stroll on the beach. He had been absent from Newport during the past fortnight. Phil was nearly eight years the senior of his half-brother, and possessed neither the beauty nor the vast wealth which the latter had inherited from a Southern mother.

But Phil had scarcely started on his walk when he saw what caused him to quickly retrace his steps. A shower of flossy golden curls, a thin shawl, half falling from the graceful shoulders, left him in no doubt as to who occupied the end of the long hotel piazza. It was Rose Thorne, and for a wonder she was alone. The "chance" had come sooner than he expected, and Phil saw no reason why he should not avail himself of it.

"Miss Thorne?"

A pair of violet eyes looked up quickly into his, and then two little hands were extended in welcome. Phil took them both in his for a moment, but refused the seat she motioned to him to take beside her.

"No; I will only detain you for a few moments, and it is to ask a favor of you that I am come."

"A favor? Nothing very difficult to grant, I trust," she said, smiling.

"No; at least I hope not. Miss Thorne, my brother has told me of the offer he has recently made you, and of your rejection of his suit?"

"Well?" and a grave look came over the little face.

"And the favor I am about to ask, is that you will consider your answer more seriously before you make it final one. You are young and thoughtless—may perhaps have been actuated by coquetry. But I am very much devoted to you, and I can see no possible objection to your being his wife, for in two months he comes into possession of his entire property, and—"

Phil paused abruptly, for he read in his companion's wide, unsmiling eyes and scornfully curved lips, what forbade him to go on.

"You do well to stop there, Mr. Van Arden. Did it never occur to you that there might be a 'possible objection' to my becoming your brother's wife, in the fact that I did not love him? You say I am young and thoughtless. May I ask how old you think I am?"

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WHO'S TO BLAME?

BY JOS. F. MORAN.

Out in the street a little child
Was begging night and morn;
Her form was thin, her face was sad
Her garments were well worn—
With poverty and sorrow
Her little heart was torn.

"Oh, pit, stranger—pit me!
And some assistance lend
A helpless little wanderer
Without a home or friend!"
Such was that plaintive story
A story without end.

Day after day she told it thus;
By some she was believed,
But others thought if help they'd give
They only be deceived
And so kept back the penny
By which she'd been relieved.

Can it be such a wonder, then,
Or would she be to blame
While leading such a life as that?
She'd strike the path of shame!
And follow—blindly follow
Till to her grave she came?

So you who know what 'tis to be
Without a home or friend,
I'm sure you'll all take
And some assistance lend
To those with that sad story
That story without end!

Unexpected Deliverance;

OR, A DEBT OF GRATITUDE.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

"Hust! Andy, there she comes now!"
I see, we'll nab her in a minnit if she
keeps on."

The speakers were crouching down amid a clump of shrubbery, behind a small vine-wreathed arbor, near the end of a large garden. They had been lying here for nearly an hour, and it was evident that their designs were not the most friendly. The reverse of that, or they would not have taken so much care to keep concealed whenever one of the slaves chanced to pass near.

One—the first speaker—was a medium-sized man, of apparently five and twenty years of age, well-built and muscular, garbed in a half-hunter suit of gray cloth. In features he was handsome; uncommonly so, in fact.

His companion was one of that peculiarly Southern class, almost nondescript, termed "crackers," sand-hillers, clay-eaters, poor white trash, and a dozen similar sobriquets, far from complimentary. His dress was greasy and rough, tattered and mud-smeared. They were armed alike, with knife and pistols.

Their gaze was directed toward the low, rambling white house, that looked more like a cluster of buildings than one alone. A woman had just stepped out of the side-door and was slowly sauntering toward the small arbor, beside which the two men crouched.

A light scarf was thrown over her head, and as she strode leisurely along, her gaze fixed upon the pages of a book held in one hand. Even at that distance it could be seen that she was of more than ordinary beauty, both of face and form.

A perfect brunette, with luxuriant hair, shining with a blue-black tinge, large, lustrous eyes, now vailed by the long, fringed lids; a tall, superbly rounded figure, that moved with a peculiar grace; such was Marie Dupont.

She slowly neared the arbor, and intent upon the passage she was reading, paused by it unconsciously, the path making a curve that placed the vine-wreathed arbor between her and the house. Then a rustling sound startled her, and she glanced up with a slight exclamation.

But, ere she had time to scream, or, indeed, divine the peril that threatened her, a blanket was cast over her head, effectually stifling all outcry, and she was borne to the ground.

"Quick, Andy—take hold of her and help me over the fence! If seen now, our lives would not be worth a penny!" whispered the younger of the two men, who was apparently the leader.

"You're mighty right, cap'n! Hyan' her over to me—so."

"Now for the horses! We must ride fast, or they may find out our loss soon enough to make it a race of life or death!"

The two abductors conveyed the senseless girl rapidly through the woods until a couple of strong horses were reached. The younger man mounted, and, supporting Marie before him, led the way at a rapid pace through the swampy woods.

For good three miles they rode, breaking their trail, as they thought, effectually, by means of the sluggish streams and ponds of water, here and there, until, finally, they came out upon a clearing, where stood a building upon a little knoll of ground. A hideous-looking, thick-set negro met them at the door, with a malignant smile upon his features, slating the young man as "Marse Poullens."

"You, Tom, open the doors to the north room," cried Poullens, dismounting, and carrying his half-unconscious captive into the house.

He gently placed her upon a couch, and then turning, left her alone.

"Tom, where is Curtin?"

"Out daid in de 'table, sleepin', I's peet."

"Go tell him to come here and finish his work. I want this end boarded up before I get back. The lazy scoundrel! he should have had it done long ago. Wait! Look here, Tom, can you keep a secret?"

"Lor', Marse Frank, reckin I kin! Jes' try me—dat's all."

"Well, then, I don't want you to let any one know who is in that room. Don't let any one go in, or her come out. Do you understand?"

The negro nodded assent.

"Very well. Do this, and when I come back you can get as drunk as you please. I'm to be married to-night, Tom. Why, boy, what are you looking so frightened about?"

"What'll ol' Tom do den? You'll brek' up de band?"

"No. I will still keep it running. So don't fret. But, go now and call Curtin. Make haste."

The darky darted off and soon returned with a tall, gaunt man, another specimen of the genus "cracker." Then Poullens mounted his horse and rode off, while Tom explained what Curtin was to do.

That worthy set about his task with a look of disgust upon his homely features. Tom disappeared for a moment, and then returning with a huge, rusty, bell-mouthed blunderbuss, took a station beside the door that opened into the room where was the captive.

"What's that fer, Tom?" demanded Curtin, uneasily.

"Nuffin much. An'y Morse he done got a Phelps in dar. Tole me to keep 'im in, fer fear he'd git out an' hurt you—yah! yah!"

"Who is it in that, Tom?"

"None o' your business. You go 'long to work, now, 'fo' I bust you fool head!" growled the negro.

As it grew dark, Tom lighted a candlestick in a block attached to the wall, and then, with a prolonged yawn, seated himself upon the floor. Presently his huge head began to droop, and then a steady snore announced that he had fallen asleep. The door behind him opened, and Marie stood revealed to the wondering gaze of the "cracker."

"Miss Dupont—you here?"

"Hist! Don't wake him," whispered Marie, as Tom stirred.

He raised his head, muttering some unintelligible words, and then began to nod once more. Curtin feared to speak, but picking up a piece of red keel, wrote upon one of his boards:

"Can I help you?"

"Yes; take me home," answered Marie, slowly tracing the letters one by one in her forefinger.

"Step back and shut the door," wrote the man, and then as Marie noiselessly withdrew, he paused as if to meditate.

He hesitated only for a moment, and then raised a heavy piece of oaken board, brought it down with fearful force upon the bowed head of the negro. It was well aimed, and Tom sunk forward in a heap with a terribly shattered skull; not uttering a moan. Curtin drew him into one corner and partially concealed him beneath some boards, and then turned once more toward the door.

Marie stood there, pale but composed. She had heard the horrible crushing sound, but knowing that by such a course only could she hope to escape, did not regret the deed.

"Come, Miss Marie, we must hurry. There's no tellin' when some o' the boys may come back. That's bosses in the stable; we kin git them an' ride to your home."

While Curtin is saddling the animals a word of explanation may not be amiss. For several years during the decade preceding the late war, a portion of South Carolina was infested by a daring and ruthless band of outlaws. One of their leaders—although

was the strife. The combatants were wild—mad, and scarcely knew who they were fighting.

Their cuts and thrusts were dealt at random. Friend struck friend as often as enemy. There was no thought of retreat—no thought of asking or giving quarter.

They were clenched in each other's arms, and for a horrible ten minutes the conflict continued. Thus it closed, and one man arose. It was Curtin.

He glanced around him and staggered to his horse, that still stood near him. Then he reeled and fell to the ground, dead!

He had paid his debt of gratitude with his life!

Marie soon gave the alarm, but assistance came too late to aid her rescuer. All they could do was to afford him a Christian burial.

How the outlaw band was finally broken up does not concern this sketch.

Marie Dupont—long since married—still lives near the scene of her abduction.

Iva's Bridgroom.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

OVER the snow-bound landscape the cold, steely glimmer of the stars looked down, till their far-away twinkling shone among the warm, cheery lights that streamed from the windows of the Forrester farm-house.

In the front room, up-stairs, pretty little Iva Forrester flitted to and fro, her pink cheeks flushing with delighted pride as she folded and arranged the dainty garments in the tall trunk, and laid carefully in their places rustling ribbons and feathered laces.

"I almost envy you, Iva, times you are sure to have in New York, at your aunt Ethelyn's."

It was a tall, dark-haired, brown-eyed girl that spoke—Iva's confidential friend, and a girl who was proud and pretty.

Iva's violet eyes raised to Madge Velmer's.

"Won't it be splendid? I feel as if I never can wait until Tuesday to start, and here to night is only Friday!"

"And then, when you do go, you'll forget us all, I'm sure!"

"Madge! you know better than that. As I could ever forget mother and you, and Ira's."

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from him who was evidently performing the part of spokesman.

When the bull-fighter had measured these men, and bestowed a searching glance upon the Viscount, he muttered, while his hand glided to the pistol beneath his blouse:

"There is mischief in this. Here is the fellow I spit upon last night. He feels sore yet from the insult. He would have satisfaction. These allies are hired to attack me. Let them try it. If I lay hands upon them, I shall crack their brainless heads together till they ring like bells."

"Your answer is not a suitable one, considering our stations," continued the Viscount.

"Then make what you like of it. As for stations—pah!" snapping his fingers, independently, and then he pursued: "What do you want of me? You were waiting for me—you address me—and yet you say nothing. If this is all, stand aside! I am hungry, and want my supper."

"And who said we wished to exchange words with you, bragging Spaniard?"

"Said, or unsaid, I see you hesitate in something, noble coward."

"Hear how he talks!" cried the young man to his companions.

"Then, why do you waste time with him? At him now!" was their simultaneous rejoinder; and, as they advanced upon Diego, the Viscount dashed forward with upraised arm.

Quick as thought, though with apparent ease, the bull-fighter caught the young man's arm in a vice-like grip, and placed the cold muzzle of a pistol to his temple.

In the same moment, one of the others came upon Diego's rear, struck him a blow on the head, and, while staggering under its effect, the pistol was wrenched from his grasp and discharged.

The bullet cut a hole through his sombrero.

At first, the Spaniard was surprised at this unexpected promptness and success of action; and for a brief space, they clung tenaciously to him, hammering him with their fists, yet striving, in vain, to bring him to the ground.

Then there was a growl, he shook them off, vented a loud roar, and laid about him with all the telling force of his enormous strength.

Whiz! thing! The Viscount Berkeley found himself spinning like a top out into the center of the street, where he sprawled, full length.

The attacking party were strong, but they did not know their man.

Diego Perez kept his word.

He knocked them down, as a careful player will a set of nine-pins, and when they scrambled up, he sent them to the earth again—his ponderous fist cutting, and circling, and darting horizontally through the air like lightning streaks, and with irresistible precision. With every sweep of his brawny arm there issued from his lips a grunting crack.

Seizing a favorable opportunity, he grasped his assailants, one in each hand, and at a jerk, brought their heads together with a stunning crack.

Pausing to bestow a kick upon the Viscount, who had recovered from his first experience and was about to renew the attack, Diego Perez uttered a hoarse laugh, and, picking up the pistol, which lay at his feet, started off at a slow pace, glancing over his shoulder to see if they dared to follow him.

When the Viscount Berkeley could collect his scattered senses, and found breath to speak, he raved at the men who had suffered in his employ; called them fools, cowards; tried to bribe them by rich offers to pursue the bull-fighter. But they shook their now half-crazed heads, and muttering maledictions on the fate that had led them into such a plight, slunk away.

The Viscount entered the gaming-house, In a dark, filthy, and naturally uninviting alley, which branched off from one of the more secluded thoroughfares, was situated a dingy-looking, dilapidated building termed a house. It was the home, the abode of Diego Perez; occupied by himself and an old hag, known to the neighborhood as Madge Marks.

This woman, being somewhat connected with our story, must necessarily be introduced to the reader; and, therefore, we look into the habitation, select its chief and best room, which is at most, a dirty den of foul odor.

A candle burns upon a table; beside it sat a bowl and plate, and knife and fork, as if the arrival of some one was momentarily expected; while she who baked the coarse bread, and made the muddy coffee, sits before the hearth, gazing silently into the smoldering embers.

Madge Marks was a woman of masculine build; a hag of ugly mien; disagreeable to look upon, for, about the corners of a toothless mouth, were yellow streaks, which told that she chewed snuff. Her features were wasted and wrinkled in flabby seams. The comb and brush were strange to her thick, black and wiry hair. Her eyes, small, jet-black, still sparkled and flashed like the orbs of a serpent, and the fire therein bespeak an evil nature—one much to be feared.

She feared neither man, beast, God, nor devil. She loved liquor, and was addicted to fits of drunkenness, in which none could manage her but Diego Perez.

She was sober then. She sat there, reflecting, absurdly, upon something, which, in all probability, was nothing!

Presently, the door opened, and a man entered. It was Diego; and as he drew up a chair to the table, he cast aside his hat and cloak, growling, at the same time:

"Here I am, Madge Marks, and starved to madness. Where is my supper?"

"It's sorry meal to-night, Diego," returned the hag, as she proceeded to place the rough fare before him.

"Well, well," he said, and the voice seemed to issue from the very pit of his stomach, "good or bad, I am starved, I say; and if it be not so good as what I oftentimes get outside, I shall eat it nevertheless, give it to me," and his capacious jaws were soon hard at work.

Suddenly, Madge cried: "Ha! Diego, what's this on your sleeve—blood?"

"Yes, blood," he replied, indifferently, as he raised the beer-mug to his lips.

"And how came it there?" she continued, interrogatively.

"Why do you ask? You seek to pry into my actions always. I am tired of it. Keep your peace."

"Tell me how the blood came upon your sleeve," persisted Madge Marks.

Diego finally told her of his fight in the street; and at the conclusion of his explanation, she shook all over, as she laughed in a harsh, sepulchral way. Suddenly, however, she sobered down, and asked:

"But what were you doing at the mansion

of Lord Hallison Blair? We bargained to keep aloof from him, you know."

"Look at me!" bellowed he. "You see me? Do you read me? Am I one who would tell all his secrets at the asking?"

With this, he turned again to his repast.

But Madge screamed in his ear:

"Devils on earth! am I a baby, that you should keep your secrets from me? Do you think I'll prattle them about like a brainless child? Tell me your business with the Englishman—if you had any."

"I had none," was the Spaniard's brief answer, hoping to end her curiosity.

"Now you are lying, Diego Perez. I see the falsehood in your face—read it in your words."

At this, he started up, and raised his great fist to strike her. Madge Marks flinched not, but looked him steadily in the eyes, while she sneered at him:

"Strike if you dare! You know me better than to do that," and there was a deep significance in the banter which caused him to pause in what he was about to do.

Grumbling in a dissatisfied way, he resumed his seat, and she resumed her importunities.

There was one person who knew Diego Perez, and did not fear him. He was one person whom the bull-fighter would not injure by insulting word or angry blow.

That person was Madge Marks; and whether it was that her glance, her speech, her action awed him, or that he feared her, from some secret, inexplicable cause, was a question which the Spaniard himself could not answer.

"Will you tell me—sulky wolf!—what business appointment you had with his lordship?"

Perceiving that she would not cease to torment him, he related the bargain he had entered into with the Englishman; and concluded by saying:

"The money is all mine this time. No half for you. So let that end our talk about it."

He expected her to cry out for half the money immediately, but, to his surprise, she remained quiet for a few seconds, her eyes bent upon the bare floor. Then she looked up, and said:

"You must not do this deed, Diego."

"Not do it!" he roared, in astonishment.

"Ho! what's the matter now? Has Madge Marks joined the church? Has she reformed?"—become a cackling preacher on the vice of murder? Bah! let me alone! This is my affair—not yours. Keep your peace."

"Diego, I say you must not do this deed," repeated the hag, emphatically.

Diego Perez was at first, astonished.

Now he was bewildered. Hitherto Madge had always been with him, heart and soul, in every plot or scheme to obtain money. Here was a chance for him, and she protested against it! What meant this sudden change in her nature? Why must he foregoing his promise to execute that for which Lord Hallison Blair had agreed to pay him so liberally?

"Look at me! You see me? Do you read me? Am I one to be deterred from an object wherein lies money? Here is a hundred-pound chance."

"You must not do this deed," said Madge Marks, again, her emphasis of speech more marked than before; and then she mused aloud, though it was apparent that she did not speak for Diego's benefit: "What's this I hear? Diego to kill him? How strange! It's a long way back—yet my brain is good for it—twenty-five years—no, twenty-eight. Twenty-eight years since Sal, my sister, brought me the babe. It was three years old then. Sal's dead now, I guess. I have not heard of her for nearly twenty years. I saw her once after I came back from America. Can this be him?—Lord Victor Hassan B. They called him Victor Hassan. I called him Vic, till I cut away from him. But here is Lord Victor Hassan B. Diego is about to kill him. What if it should be the child? I would save him; not that I care for him an atom, but because I hate the usurper of his rights!—I hate the man, the son of my sister, who revels in wealth that is not his. This must be prevented."

In as few words as possible, he told her how he had been holding conversation with Hallison Blair in the arbor, when he was suddenly struck a blow which rendered him insensible; and how his mind had been a blank, until he awoke to a realization of his living tomb.

Throughout his explanation, the girl listened attentively and in amazement.

"Now, Kate," he concluded, "you must say nothing about having rescued me. Be sure and keep silent. I have a great object."

"Oh, to be sure! I won't say anything if you don't want me to."

"But, how happened it that you so providentially came here?" Victor continued.

"There! that reminds me of my errand. Mr. Blair sent me for some wine. I expect he'll be angry at my staying so long," and as she hastened to select a couple of bottles from the shelves, Victor said, inquiringly, and at hazard:

"I suppose Hallison Blair has already made himself a sort of master about the Home Mansion?"

"Yes, sir, he has. He and that doctor seem to be doing whatever they please. I don't know anything—I suppose it's all right, though. It must be."

"But it is not, Kate; and I hope to be able to show that to you, before a great while. I think there is a piece of villainy going on."

"Laws!"

She was moving away, and he added:

"I shall remain here. Do you perform your errand, and then return to me. When you come, bring some water, so that I can wash the blood from my face."

The girl took up the candle, and he was again enveloped in thick darkness—but how different from that which had shrouded him so long ago.

It was also essential that we follow him after his delivery from death, to see why he was registered on the books of the Hotel, in London, as Lord Victor Hassan B.

The young man was merely stunned, unconscious, yet in a state so nearly bordering on actual death that he would be murdered were completely deceived.

When they left him they considered him dead; while, even as they ascended the stairs leading from the cellar, their intended victim was slowly recovering his senses.

When the heart resumed its regular beatings, the blood its natural flow, and the faculties asserted their sway, it required considerable effort to recall the past, and having done this, his thoughts tended to a realization of the present.

Where was he? He reached out his hand; to the right, it came in contact with rough wood; to the left, it encountered a like substance; overhead was the same; he was lying, prostrate on his back, on hard boards.

"What can this mean?" he exclaimed; and the hollow, choked, sepulchral tones of his voice alarmed him. He noticed that his respiration was heavy, despite himself; he was cramped, though he could raise his arms above his head; no sound came from his ear; all was flushed, fearfully stiff.

The atmosphere grew warmer; he breathed heavier; and as the moments passed, there came before his strained vision red and yellow flashes of light, and moving spires of blue and green, studded with golden, flaming dots.

The time flew by. He kicked at the wooden covering above him; he hallooed; he pounded with his fists, until his knuckles were sore and bleeding, and his voice hoarse and unnatural. All in vain. After every effort, to release himself from his strange, dark, horrible prison, there came the same ominous, mocking silence which maddened the brain and checked the pulsations of the heart.

Suddenly, he comprehended his situation, and he trembled in ungovernable horror. He was buried alive!

He cried out afresh, kicked the stronger, pounded the more determinedly; but only

to experience a result similar to that which had attended his former exertions—fatigue, alarm, despair. Finally, he sunk back, helpless; the hot air grew hotter. Then came a ringing in the ears, as if numerous drums and cymbals, at a long distance off, were rapidly approaching in hammering, rattling, clashing discord.

He gasped for breath. His senses spun around as in a mad-dream, he was falling back to insensibility, and thence, perchance, to death.

But, at that critical moment, he caught the faint sound of a step, directly over his head. He was seized with new hope, new strength of voice and limb. He cried out with despairing energy: "Help! help! help!" and immediately heard a voice exclaim:

"Mercy on us! what's that?"

"Help! help!" he shouted. "It is I. I am buried alive! Here I—underneath your feet."

There was a timid scream, and some one answered, in female accents:

"It's Mr. Victor Hassan! Where are you, sir? I'm frightened to death—"

"Kate! Kate! don't you know me? I am here!—buried right under your feet! I am suffocating!—dying!"

"Land's sake! it is a ghost!"

"No, no; no; it is I—Victor Hassan. I don't know where I am, except that I am in the ground, underneath your feet. Help me out—quick! or I shall die!"

Though frightened half out of her wits, when first attracted by the voice of appeal, which seemed to issue from the very bowels of the earth, the girl finally mastered her superstitious feeling, and comprehended that there actually was a live mortal beneath her, covered up by the new, damp earth.

As Victor renewed his urging, she grasped a pick, struck it into the ground with all her strength, and had the satisfaction of hearing it strike a hard substance.

Then, alternately using shovel and pick, the lid of the box was at length exposed, and torn open, when Victor Hassan dragged himself out into the pure air.

"Land's sake!" exclaimed his deliverer, throwing aside the implements which he held, and quickly assisting him—for he tottered weakly, under the sudden, joy-giving, life-preserving change.

"Land's sake! Mr. Victor; how did you ever get buried there?"

"Get me some water, Kate—quick! in husky, failing tone.

At one side were sundry shelves containing wine, and hurriedly procuring a bottle, she handed it to him, as a substitute for the beverage he asked.

To break the neck, and drink the stimulating liquor in eager gulps, was but a moment's work, and he immediately felt invigorated by the draught.

"How in the world did you get in there, Mr. Hassan?" pointing to the grave; "and—gracious me!" you are covered with

wine, and the liquid was nearly abreast of him.

"Hello!" returned the man, suspiciously, though reining in his horses.

"Hold on, friend!" cried Victor. "Stop a minute."

"Hello!" returned the man, suspiciously, though reining in his horses.

"It is me!"

"It isn't! It isn't! I say it isn't! To go and take a body from the tomb? To walk among the graves? Horror! Not wisdom, but absolute lunacy, this is!"

"Will you be quick, or must I go alone?"

"Alone! Would you dare to go alone?"

"Positively, yes."

"Suppose we should be seen—but you are crazy?"

"I am not crazy, Mr. Kraak. I am bent

which supported the coffin containing the body of Calvert Herndon.

"Don't touch it! Don't touch it!" cried Kraak, while his limbs trembled, and the hair upon his head fairly raised. "You'll arouse all the fiends, goblins, phantoms, etc., of the other world. Oh, Lord! let us go away from here."

"Silence!" rejoined Victor; and the superintendent obeyed him, while he shook as with an ague, and rattled the lantern in his hand.

Victor produced his knife, which was, very fortunately, something more than a mere penknife, and opening the large blade, proceeded with considerable effort to turn the coffin-screws.

While thus engaged, both distinctly heard a smothered groan.

Victor uttered an exclamation, and redoubled his efforts; while Kraak became whiter, more fearful, trembled till his teeth chattered.

"I told you so. That's the voice of the devil! We're done for! Heaven receive my soul! there it is again! Oh! oh! Why was I born? Why did ever I accept the Superintendency of the Laurel Hill, with its graves, and its tombs, and its dead bodies, and the consequences of this horrible night? It's my dream. Something strange is brewing; fearful discoveries. Lord! there it is again."

There was another groan came to their ears, hushed, faint, yet audible; seeming to dwell in the air, issue from the earth, exist upon the lips of the sacred invisibility.

At last the first piece was removed and turned down upon its hinges.

Though Victor Hasson expected it, though he was prepared for it, he drew back quickly, a shuddering thrill pervading his system.

Kraak stooped; the hat fell from his head; his mouth opened; his eyes distended; the astounding discovery they had made, for a moment wrought such amazement in the Superintendent, that his senses of fear were paralyzed, he gaped at what he saw—motionless, pale as a ghost; holding the lantern mechanically, for, in truth, he forgot it was in his hand.

Wrapped in white, gauzy shroud, the features immovable and of a deathly hue, Calvert Herndon gazed upon them, from his coffin with an unctuous expression. The bloodless lips moved—but they uttered no sound; the eyes closed wearily, the head turned upon its narrow pillow of satin, there was a deep sigh, then a hushed surrounding. Kraak was completely overcome, and letting fall the lantern, he sunk to the stone floor in a semi-conscious state.

Victor Hasson had been correct in his suspicions. It was no delusion when he thought that he detected upon Calvert Herndon's lips, as the latter lay in his coffin at the Home Mansion, a slight moisture; but it was a fact now proved. There, in the tomb of the dead, within the sacred precincts of final bodily rest, the lips were seen to move, the eyes to gaze—not vacantly nor staring, but with the light of life; the head was seen to turn; and as the atmosphere began to act upon the skin, a perceptible blush suffused the cheeks.

Fortunately, Victor recovered himself in time to snatch up the lantern, which, but for his prompt attention, would have been extinguished.

Setting it upright, carefully upon the flags, he again plied his knife-blade to the screws, working with all the rapidity capable to his energy, at the same time crying to the superintendent:

"Get up, man, get up. Don't you see Mr. Herndon is alive? But he has fainted. Rouse yourself, quick, and fetch some water."

Kraak struggled to his feet, and stood gaping, staring, bewildered, as if powerless to stir; but aroused by the young man's impatient tone, he hastened back to the house at the gate, to procure the water, scarcely conscious of what he did.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 59.)

The Avenging Angels:

OR,
THE BANDIT BROTHERS OF THE SCIOTO.

A BORDER AND INDIAN TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "SILENT HUNTER," "QUEEN OF THE WOODS," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DARING VENTURE.

It was early when Kenewa arose. Leaving Little Bear to sleep off his previous night's feast, and walking down to the water's side he looked out in search of any enemy that might be in sight. But none were to be seen. On every side, wherever the eye rested, nothing met the view but the mirror-like surface of the lake, the blue firmament of heaven, and the dense skirtings of the woods.

Satisfied with the prospect, Kenewa returned to where the young Huron lay, this time rousing him by the use of his foot. Little Bear in an instant was on his feet, ready at a word for action in any way he was wanted.

First a frugal meal was dispatched, and then the two returned toward the water's edge; probably because of the clear light which prevailed.

Kenewa now proceeded to divest himself of all articles of clothing that distinguished him from a Shawnee, after which he washed his paint off with an assiduity which showed how heartily he entered into whatever new enterprise he had undertaken.

Then, with a grim smile, he seated himself on the sandy, pebbly shore.

Little Bear had with him the pouch of the Shawnee, from which he took the ochre, vermilion, and other colors, which the redskins use in their personal decorations.

As soon as the chief's skin was quite dry the young Huron gravely commenced his task, and executed it with a precision and neatness which spoke much for his ingenuity and native wit.

He had not lived two months with the enemy without knowing every line, every curve, every device that would convert Kenewa into one of the tribe.

Soosoma was, when alive, a little older, but this the judicious hand of the boy soon remedied, and at the end of half an hour it would be difficult to have recognized a single feature belonging to Kenewa, who was transformed into a wild and savage Shawnee, without brains or heart, with nothing to guide him but his own unbridled passions.

"Is it well?" asked Kenewa.

"It is well," replied the boy; "my sister will not know her brave."

Kenewa smiled. He flattered himself that, once in her presence, there would not be much difficulty in making himself known.

No further remarks, however, were made, the warrior and lad entering the rude canoe, and paddling slowly down the lake in the direction of the Indian camp, which an hour later was reached.

The boat grated on the shore, Kenewa imitating the lounging gait and vacant manner of Soosoma, while Little Bear tottered behind him under the weight of what was left of the deer's carcass.

Few Indians were about, and those few took no notice of the arrival.

The glut of game the night before, with what remained of the white man's rum, had caused an orgie from which few had recovered.

Several, however, of the best young warriors had already gone forth to hunt again, leaving six of the picked junior braves to act as scouts—the intentions of the Bandits being suspected.

The sham Soosoma therefore easily gained his tent, silily pointed out to him by Little Bear. This hut was apart from the others; every thing in the outcast savage being peculiar and unlike the habits of other men.

Little Bear took his place among the youths, after casting his burden at the supposed Shawnee's tent entrance.

He could see his sister in company with the two white girls; but he was too cunning to attempt opening up a hasty communication with them, knowing that his every movement was watched.

Then came evening and the evening meal, after which the usual *no niente* mood came over the savages. The old men mumbled of the past; the middle-aged warriors smoked and talked of the present and the future; while the younger ones either kept watch and ward or sat without the circle of light, in conversation with some dusky fair one, who took advantage of the brief period of youth and beauty to be made love to in something of a tender fashion.

The rest of the women, young and old, as well as the children and boys, were collected round a second fire, at some distance from the warriors; and here, though none elevated their voices to an incautious or undignified pitch, might be heard the melodic voices of girls, the jolly laugh of children. Among these the most light-hearted of all was Matata, the Prairie Rose.

She leaned against a tree, warming herself by the fire before retiring for the night, in imitation of the pale-faces.

At some little distance, also leaning against a tree, was the Little Bear, in an attitude of utter stillness.

His eye, however, roved toward his sister, and sometimes toward the wigwam of Soosoma, from which he had seen that warrior make his exit, and enter a thicket close at hand, near the lodge of the pale-face girls.

The Black Hawk of the Shawnees sat among his warriors, but every now and then he cast a look of admiration in the direction of the girl.

Not even the old men were unaffected by the sight of the female group, toward which glances of affection were every now and then cast, as the warriors checked their own discourse to listen to the low, soft voices, and the light-hearted laugh of the girls.

Matata had been telling some legend of her own tribe, to which the others listened with respectful attention; and now, concluding, she made one step to retire. As she did so she caught a warning expression in the eye of Little Bear that made her delay her movements. She distinctly heard from the thicket the low chirrup of the smallest kind of American squirrel—a sound common enough not to excite any very undue degree of attention.

It made the dusky maiden blush to the very eyes, it being the well-known signal that had often at night called her to the stolen interview beneath the green and leafy arches of the forest.

She did not, however, hurry her departure, but stood silently by the fire warming herself for some minutes, when she strolled away toward the lodge which she shared with the other prisoners.

Once, however, out of the line of light, she moved a little quicker, until she heard her name called in a tone she knew too well to be mistaken. Next minute she was in the arms, apparently, of Soosoma, the Solitary.

The lovers confined themselves to such words as were necessary. After the first moment, given to the impulses of human affection, Matata was quite silent, listening with deep interest to her warrior.

The graybeard had fallen ill—so ill as to excite fears in the breasts of all his friends. He was now better, but this had delayed the pursuit. Judge Mason was, however, still too ill to move; and having been amply supplied with necessities, had been left to the care of Martha.

The Avengers had then started on the trail, which, after great toil, they discovered.

Roland Edwards and his men were well concealed, in a position which Kenewa minutely described to the Prairie Rose, and where, if he obeyed the injunctions of the Huron, he was perfectly safe from discovery.

There it was agreed they should lie until Kenewa returned from an expedition, the nature of which he did not know.

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When the sun shall set six times on the lake, expect Kenewa the next—he will be here," commenced the warrior.

As he did so, a low but fearful sound arose from the forest, and was immediately succeeded by a high, shrill yell, that was long drawn out, until it equalled the longest and most plaintive howl of the wolf. Then came loud shouts, then utter silence.

All the warriors rose, and stood with arms ready round the central fire. Though all were really eager and expectant, not one stirred to ask a question; nor, when the young men whose voices had so startled them came from beneath the trees, bearing a heavy burden, did one syllable escape from any of the group.

Then the burden was laid down, and the name of Soosoma became visible.

"Ugh!" cried Theoderigo; "what dog has done this? But where found you the body, sons of the Shawnee race?"

One of the hunters modestly explained.

"Then there is a false Soosoma in the camp," he said, in a low tone. "A fox of the Huron is laughing in our faces. Let him be found."

"Who comes?" said a quiet but commanding voice, while both distinctly heard the sound of a rifle being cocked.

"Kenewa," was the guttural reply; and just next instant the canoe grated on the rocky shore, and the mystery of this water grotto was revealed to both the chief and his young companion.

The whole party was there, only Judge Mason, who had necessarily been left behind near the Pilot Rock under the charge of Martha.

The Avengers, condemned to inactivity, were sullen and moody. With every faith in Kenewa, their spirits chafed; and there were moments when all would have gladly rushed in to do battle with the overwhelming force of Shawnees and Bandits, though all were aware that this open violence would end in defeat.

Drawing the boat partly out of the water, the warrior and his young companion seated themselves by the fire, when, in deference to the impatience of his comrades and the rank of Roland Edwards, which was really that of captain in the army, he at once narrated his two nights' adventures.

All listened with intense interest.

But when Kenewa spoke of the Bandits, every eye kindled with fierce and angry passion. These demons, who were ever in their thoughts, were then to a certain extent in their power. Not one but fully understood the motive of their outlying on the

lake. The Prairie Rose had explained to the Sioux chief the pretended motive of their departure, so that their secret return boded no good to the unfortunate prisoners, whether white or red-skin.

"Thank you!" said Roland, when the Indian had finished. "This is, indeed, scouting to some purpose. What say you, my men—shall we let these incarnate fiends rest in peace one night so near us?"

"No," was the universal answer of the whole party.

"Kenewa is ready," said the chief, after two words with the Little Bear, spoken in a low tone in his native language.

No more was said, the whole party assembling without any roll-call, and mustering for the night expedition under the leadership of Captain Roland Edwards and the guidance of Kenewa.

Little Bear remained alone in the cavern.

Kenewa, accompanied by Roland, entered the canoe, while the others poled out a light raft which had enabled them to reach the secret and unknown covert. Not a sound broke the stillness of the night, save the faint ripple of the water caused by the raft.

The borders of the lake were closely examined, though with it they had as yet nothing to do.

Suddenly Kenewa raised his paddle to where a thread of smoke could be seen stealing along the cloudless sky, as if from a half-dying fire.

"There," he whispered.

Their course was now to the northward, up the lake; and they had not advanced more than twenty yards further when they came in sight of the camping-place of the robbers; and the smoke which had guided them was now seen to proceed from a large fire kindled upon the island, and which every moment became broader, redder, and more effulgent. It was quite a glaring red orb, resting on the surface of the lake itself, as it appeared, thus concealing all but the smoke from the lookers-out of the Shawnees.

"This is some Indian deviltry," whispered Roland, huskily.

"No; 'tis the cunning of the pale-face thieves. They seek to trap the Shawnees. The big robbers of the Scioto have gone."

And bidding those on the raft remain stationary, Kenewa sent his bark swiftly toward the island, where it grounded on the gravelly beach with a gentle motion and a sound barely audible.

The Huron had selected a spot some little distance from the fire, and landed, leaving his rifle in the canoe. Though he was perfectly certain of what he should discover, the warrior neglected none of the usual precautions, gliding into the forest, walking softly with his moccasined feet, and never speaking nor making any sound until he stood in full view of the fire.

Then he waved the others to proceed.

"The rats have left their hole, and would steal the hostages they have placed in the hands of the red-skins. We must creep to the Shawnee camp."

Again the canoe and raft were in motion, and in a moment more, turning the end of the island, they came in sight of the position occupied by the enemy.

The canoe was paddled with all caution toward the camp until they reached a placid spot which gave them a full view of the Shawnee temporary village. It was, as Kenewa knew, admirably chosen, having not only a spring of choice water—an indispensable requisite of an Indian camp—but also a certain radius without being seen.

The fire had been allowed to fall low and gave but a flickering and failing light, though, just as they came near, one of the sentries rose, cast on a pile of brush, lit his pipe, and returned to a post at no great distance from the great lodge, which was still silent, and utterly motionless. A deathlike silence reigned over the whole scene.

The change produced by the pile of brushwood mixed with a few pine-knots, was magical. The fire blazed fiercely, casting its light upward into the tops of the trees, with a pleasing and striking effect. The sudden glare had its advantage, for it not only illuminated the camp, but none could enter within a certain radius without being seen.

The edge of the camp was composed of a fringe of thick bushes, and upon these the two men fixed their eyes. They had seen the raft making for a spot higher up the lake, where its occupants might effect a landing out of sight of the Shawnees.

Not a single sentinel was visible, save the one whose double duty seemed to consist in keeping up the fire and watching the tent occupied by the prisoners.

Suddenly the bushes parted about ten feet behind the sentinel, and the hideous face of Moses Horne peered out upon the clearing. He then turned his head, and appeared to whisper something to others who were behind him.

The sentinel stood with his back to a tree, smoking. His eyes were half closed

JIM CARR FROM "SCOOPER'S FLAT."

BY DAVID PAULDING.

Do I know Scooper's Flat?
Yes' yer know it, still know it from that;
S'lit'd say I did, still know reckless Jim Carr,
He got wiped out down hyar in a muss with a b'ar,

Leastwise I heard that.

S'lit'd say Jim war grit!
Thankee stranger, I'll take mine straight—
He c'n't lick any thin' of his size and weight.
From East or West. He hailed from Kentucky State—

Water? Just then he le' st bit.

Jim war allus lookin' fur muss.
Thar kom from York a chap named Lee,
Staked out his o'le 'long' of Jim and me.
A fine-lookin' feller, good as they make 'em yer see,

Nyther war right, that same.

Things condon't last so, of course.
Lee stnd it all quite a while. Sheered I thar out
But he stnd it well! Jes' ther same: what we war about.
He knowed. At last they met and then—then they

fought.

Lee git licked? not a bit, ol' hoss!
They fit and bit and goured, yer know.
Just Jim on top, then Lee: just one up then he
war down.

Jim's ha' was thinned out and scattered on the
ground:
They gong'd and bit. The way them ar' chaps did
ponud.

Each other! Yer bet 'twarn't slow.

Jim got sick and squealed.
A lie? Stranger, jes' thinkin' I took over that that,
No man kin tell me I lie. What? sho! you Jim
Carr?

Little Edwin knowed that all ther time, that ar'

Same I own I rubbed yer rough.

Washed Overboard.

BY ROGER STARBUCK.

AMONG the passengers aboard the ship Nautilus, bound home to New York from the East Indies, was Annie Barton, a beautiful young woman of twenty, who had been to visit a much-loved brother, agent for a wealthy New York firm. He had been taken ill, and as his many duties at the East India station determined him not to desert his post, his sister had gone out to nurse him; thanks to her attentions, he was soon doing so well, that she started on her return to New York with an old uncle, a minister, who had accompanied her from that city.

The beautiful blue eyes of Annie, her unrivaled form, her bright, shining brown hair, and soft, low voice, made a strong impression on the captain of the Nautilus, a young man of twenty-eight.

In a word, he fell desperately in love with her, and so plainly told the Rev. John Barton, Annie's uncle, asking permission to pay attentions to the sweet girl.

A prior acquaintance with Captain Rogers, at the Indies, had convinced Barton of his worth. As he was temperate, industrious and intelligent, he saw no reason why the young skipper's wishes should not be complied with, his niece, of course, being willing.

Annie had admired the captain from the first. He was a handsome, dashing fellow, frank, courteous and manly, well calculated to please a sensible young woman like her.

And so, ere they had been at sea many days, Rogers was the girl's accepted lover.

Late one afternoon they stood conversing near the weather quarter rail, alternately watching the blue outline of a distant island and the masts of a sail to leeward. The sun shone brightly and the sky was of a clear blue.

Suddenly a singular, hollow humming was heard, as if some distant, unseen being were blowing a conch-shell directly over their heads.

A sort of yellowish haze passed over the sun, and a dark amber tint fell upon sky and water.

With a hasty excuse, Captain Rogers sprang from Annie's side, and his clear voice went through the ship like the report of musketry.

"Hands by the halliards! clew up royals and to'gallant sails; clew down topsails; haul down the jibs;"

hands to wash over shorted.

In ten minutes the vessel was under

shortened canvas—not a moment too soon.

With a shriek and a howl the storm pounced upon her. She went down on her beam-ends, tearing through the white foaming waters with the speed of a frightened bird. A dark, red haze filled the air; the spray flew up in long columns, whirling round and round, while the scream of the blast and the thunder of the sea made continuous din. As the ship bowled along, with her bending masts so far over that her topsail yards dipped, every timber was heard creaking a dismal complaint, while the weather shrouds, bellied far inward, told of the strength of the gale.

Suddenly the carpenter, with white lips, ran up to the captain.

"The water is making badly into the hold, sir!"

"Rig the pumps!"

The clanging of the pumps soon was heard.

But the water gained with singular rapidity.

The carpenter reported seven feet water in the hold!

"One of them bottom timbers has got loosened," he continued.

"I always thought the ship was weak thereabout, and the strain has made that timber shrink."

Captain Rogers at once gave orders to have a large yawl, which he had brought with him, got in readiness, and lowered.

"Ere the men could obey, the main topsail was blown clear of the gasket, and flapping wildly, threatened to bring the mast down upon them, while at their work.

"Aloft there, lively, all of you!" was the command, "and stow that sail!"

There were fifteen foremast hands aboard, who at once ran up and "laid" out on the yard.

Just as they got there, snap went the man-topsail-lifts, parting, the ship rolled, and the sail slatting at the moment when the yard tilted, all upon it were whirled, and so many shots, into the wild sea.

It was too rough to lower a boat for them; but some spare spars and several hecups were thrown over.

The poor wretches drifted far to leeward, and were soon hidden in the black rock and mist of the raging tempest.

Meanwhile, the ship was settling lower every moment. The roaring and gurgling of the water could be distinctly heard as it poured into her hold.

The captain, assisted by his officers, swung the yawl over the sea, and having secured it by ropes to the ship, cut the lashings holding it, when it dropped alongside.

Annie had come on deck with her uncle, when a great sea came dashing along, lifted her from her feet, and tore her from the grasp of the old man, who had vainly endeavored to hold her!

She was carried far to leeward, her long, bright hair streaming on the water, her despairing face turned for a few moments toward the ship.

Captain Rogers heard the shriek of the unfortunate girl, and, in a moment, he would have plunged into the sea, with a rope around his waist, to secure her, or perish in the attempt, but for a loosened block, which, falling from aloft at that moment, laid him senseless.

When he recovered, he found himself aboard the yawl, with his much loved friend, Tom Bunt, the first-mate, bending over him. It was night, with moonlight; although there was a fog, the squall had passed far away to leeward, but there was no sign of the ship.

"She went down in about a quarter of an hour after we got aboard the yawl," said Bunt. "Rolled over, made one plunge, and was out of sight."

"Annie—of course—she—she is safe?" stammered the captain, hardly daring to ask the question.

"Alas! no!" answered Bunt; "the last we saw of her she was clinging to a spar off in the rack! We have been heading there-away ever since, but have not found her. My opinion is she must have let go, ere long. Her uncle, yourself, the second and third-mates, with myself, are the only ones saved out of all the crew!"

The captain sobbed like a child.

"Annie! Annie! Lost Annie!" he moaned, again and again.

He was soon joined by the bereaved uncle and the mates.

A consultation was held, and, as there was no water or provisions aboard, it was decided to head for land.

Early next morning they were a league from land, in which direction the fog had cleared, although still thick to leeward.

Suddenly, bursting from round a point of land, they beheld a Malay pros heading straight toward them! Ere long, with a spy-glass, they could see the crew, all armed to the teeth, clustered round the rails, gazing toward them.

My reception, after the bankers had read

the little slip of paper, was sufficient to show me that I was not mixed up in any second-rate affair, and that they evidently regarded me with a good deal of interest, aside from

thought I said that it was, and in return asked why he wished to know.

"Follow me and you will learn," was the somewhat startling proposition; for a man would be reckless indeed to obey such an injunction from every or any one he met on the streets of Santa Fe; but, prompted by a sudden impulse, I told him to lead off, looking carefully to my weapons, and fell in behind. Half an hour's walk brought us in front of a long, low adobe house, with shuttered windows and massive door, upon which my conductor knocked, and we were instantly admitted.

From the street we stepped directly into a large, well-lighted room, in which were assembled some fifteen or twenty men, evidently of the better class of Mexicans.

I need not enter into any detail in regard to this part of my adventure. After assuring themselves that I was really the person they were in quest of, they at once entered upon the business in hand.

They were the leaders of a political faction, and wanted a man upon whom they could depend, to go to New Orleans on a most delicate and highly important mission.

How they came to fix upon me I knew not, nor did I care. All I asked was that they should thoroughly inform me on every point of the matter, and then leave me to accept or decline as I thought proper.

This they did, and after thinking upon it a few minutes, I informed them that I was at their service.

When could I start, and did I need funds for the trip?

Within an hour, and I did need money. Let it suffice for me to say that the mission was a delicate one, and, they kindly informed me, there might be some danger attached thereto. Spies, hired assassins, and the like, would be on my track.

I was furnished with all necessary documents, amounting but to two little slips of paper upon which were written some cabalistic words—so they proved—and the street and numbers of the only two houses it would be needful for me to visit in the transaction of my, or, rather, their affairs. In due time I found myself comfortably quartered at the St. Charles, and early on the following morning I took a cab and drove to one of the designated places.

It was pitch dark. I felt a chill air blowing upon my face, and heard a hollow murmuring, a subdued roar were perhaps a better expression, as though of water flowing rapidly or against some obstacle.

Further, I was bound hand and foot, and gagged so securely as scarcely to permit of drawing my breath.

That it was not a dream, I was only too fully aware, and then the occurrences of the last hours, whether few or many I knew not, flashed across my brain.

It is singular how rapidly and how cor-

rectly the mind will sometimes act under such circumstances.

As though by intuition I saw through the whole plot.

The fancied friend, and his kind attentions, the days of pleasure-seeking, the visit to the faro-bank, the parting drink, the unintentional (?) rudeness of the dark-browed stranger, all formed one link with another until the chain was complete.

While my back was turned, in the act of reciting the man's excuses, my companion had drugged the liquor.

What a simpleton I had been not to have seen through it all! So I thought, as I lay bound and gagged in that unknown place.

Presently a door opened, a faint gleam of light stole in, and, immediately after, three men, masked, entered, and, without a word, lifted me up and bore me from the place.

I gave no sign of consciousness, hoping to hear something of their intentions.

But they preserved a strict silence, and continued on until the open air was reached. Here I was instantly placed in a carriage, which drove off at a rapid rate.

The drive was a lengthy one, and when the vehicle stopped, and I was lifted out, I saw that we had either left the city, or else were in some one of the many large parks or gardens that reach down to the water's edge.

There were trees and thick shrubbery on every side, save that bounded by the silent-flowing river.

No time was lost here.

A low whistle brought a fourth person from somewhere. A hurried consultation ensued, and I was again lifted and borne forward, this time into a skiff that lay moored to the bank.

I saw the end now. I was to be tossed overboard and left to feed the catfish.

A hundred feet from the shore the boat suddenly stopped. I was lifted, for the third time, or partially so, and deliberately rolled over into the water.

In such a condition, and under such circumstances, a man would naturally think there was no chance for him, and so I thought.

But, there is always a chance, a hope, as long as the breath is actually in the body.

I have said that I was rolled over the edge of the skiff, and, in doing so, one of the turns of the cord that bound my hands caught upon a row-lock, the full weight of my body was thrown upon it, it snapped like thread, and down I went.

They must have backed off the moment I disappeared, for, when I came to the sur-

face, which I did very quietly, the skiff was almost lost in the darkness.

In an instant I had torn the gag from my mouth, and was, for the time at least, saved. Swimming slowly, and without noise, I struck out for a vessel, the dim outlines of which I could see some distance below, and in ten minutes was clinging to her fore-chains.

Without difficulty I aroused the watchman, was hauled up on board, and immediately subjected to a series of questions that came tumbling out one over the other.

The following morning I returned to the city, sought out the gentlemen to whom I had borne the slips of paper, and informed them of which the affair.

They merely looked wise, advised me not to pursue the matter, but to get back to the native (?) wilds, or some other place, just as soon as convenient.

I did so, and returned to Santa Fe, where I again met the secret conclave and rendered an account of my stewardship.

So well pleased were they, that they immediately offered me another commission, which, I need hardly say, I respectfully declined.

Beat Time's Notes.

DELAYED ANSWERS.

QUEEN VICTORIA writes: "The affairs of our ocean-girded isle are in a very prosperous condition at present, so it is not the British kingdom that troubles us, but the Vegetable kingdom. You are a gentleman that goes much, and often, on your nose; will you allow me to put a vexed political question to you?" "What will kill the smell of onions?" Dear Madame: Garlic is just the thing for that purpose; then, after the garlic, you might take some Swiss cheese in large-sized pills, sugar-coated, at which point you certainly have got me, and I am yours.

JIM NASTIC. You can strengthen your muscles by daily lifting. The first day lift one pound, then each day add another pound for twenty-five or thirty years, and you will be surprised to see how many tons I could not raise a pound note, nor move a dog-pound.

A MUSE. Your verses, beginning, "He promised to love me," are very promising, (promise occurs seven times), but they won't pay. "Skillet" rhymes very well with "will it," but it always looks better in the pantry. You understand what the rules of poetry are very well, and have succeeded in avoiding them very dexterously. Here are some lines I extracted with a crowbar. "The cold, chilly winds of Augwmber," "Twas night in the lonesome Noctover," "Twas in the mild Sliptunder," etc.; neat, but not gaudy.

QUANDARY writes: "I am engaged to a city belle; but, as I have only an income of \$40,000, would it be policy for me to marry?" If you desire to marry and go into the wilderness to live, that amount of money would be sufficient—or nearly so, if you are economical.

C. DIXON. Observe the following rules for the day: Let the first thing you do in the morning be to wake up, which you can do easily enough by just opening your eyes. If you are in the habit of washing your face, do so. Be sure you are up in time to get your breakfast before dinner, and don't eat very long, but eat wide. A little exercise before breakfast would be good, so exercise on the flute. After you eat, lay off what you have got to do to-day—that is, lay off till to-morrow. Straighten your accounts, but under no consideration must you straighten your circumstances. If there are any poor in your neighborhood, don't let them suffer—for directions to the poor-house. At night go and see your girl, and be sure you are home by ten; then do your ears up in papers, and go to bed.

JIM. Men are apt to regulate their value according to their neighbor's standard; just like town-lots, rise in price with the lots adjoining.

MARIA. Widows should always use Weed's Sewing Machines.

JAKE writes: "I am in my thirtieth year, and in love. Am very good-looking, even though I have one eye, and that is crossed; my nose being lost means no disqualification to my wooden leg